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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE RELATION OF
EXTENSION SPECIALISTS TO LAND USE PLANNING

On February 28, 1941, the Director of Extension Work appointed a committee to study the various phases of land use planning in relation to the work of subject matter specialists and to develop recommendations as to ways in which such specialists can contribute most effectively to the objectives of this cooperative endeavor.

The following is a progress report of that committee:

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF LAND USE PLANNING

As understood by this committee, land use planning is a democratic process whereby farm people working with agency representatives and technicians make inventories of their agricultural and human resources, liabilities, needs, and opportunities, and later assist in translating them into action. The process begins with mapping, classifying, and planning for the wisest use of the land and then proceeds to a study of social and economic problems and their solution. Its main objective is to provide a higher level of living to farm people through more efficient land use, but other aims are: To integrate local, State and National programs relating to agriculture; to provide a means of bringing the best thinking and planning of farm people, and the best technical information available, to bear on problems and adjustments affecting the long-time welfare of agriculture; and to aid in emergency situations such as the present one of National Defense.

Land use planning functions in line with the general principles of agricultural democracy, which, as defined by M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Work, are: "(a) Decentralized local administration through farmer committeemen; (b) the use of referendums in determining certain administrative policies, such as marketing quotas; (c) the use of group

discussion and adult education to promote intelligent participation in the administration of the various farm programs; (d) cooperative planning in program formulation."

The plan of organization follows the recommendations of representatives of the Land Grant Colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture made at the Mount Weather Conference in the summer of 1938.

Land use planning functions on community, county, State and National levels. The basic county land use planning committees are made up for the most part of able farm men and women, representatives of the local administrative agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture, and representatives of other State and Federal agencies. The county agricultural agent usually serves as secretary ex officio of the county land use planning committee. The State extension director is chairman of the State committee, which is likewise composed of farm men and women representatives of the various Federal and State action agencies.

PROBLEMS RELATING TO SUBJECT MATTER SPECIALISTS' PARTICIPATION

It seems apparent that land use planning is charting in agriculture a new course that offers far-reaching potentialities for participation of subject matter specialists. At the inception of this effort, as in the beginning of many new activities, major emphasis was placed on policies and the organized set-up. Accompanying this was the immediate aim to interest farmers in studying and planning sound land use. The work presented functional problems which of necessity delayed consideration by both administrative staff and farm people as to how the program might be implemented by the assistance of subject matter specialists.

CONCEPTS OF LAND USE PLANNING AS RELATED TO SPECIALIST ASSISTANCE

The varying conditions within the several States and between States, the divergence of interpretations as to the best procedure, and lack of enthusiasm on the part of some at the outset, further obscured the question as to the place that the subject matter specialist might occupy in land use planning. Some leaders held the view that the program should reflect only the opinions of farmers and exercised caution to see that the thinking of farmers was not influenced by the subject matter specialist. Under these conditions the specialist had little opportunity to contribute to the program except indirectly through the appointed State leaders or possibly through the county agricultural agents, already absorbed in organizational activities. In some instances doors appeared to be closed even to receiving subject-matter information. Where this view prevailed no effort was made to call in subject matter specialists, to inform them regarding details of the program, or to suggest how they might contribute to the project. However, some encouragement was offered in the announcement that upon completion of the recommendations for a given area subject matter specialists would be brought into the program for the action stages.

Contrasted with this partially closed concept of land use planning, other representatives held the opinion that all resources of the State Extension Services and other educational agencies should be brought to bear on the program at the start. Although no procedure was developed regarding what course subject matter specialists should follow in assisting with the work they were encouraged to put their shoulders to the wheel. This served to stimulate thinking on the relationships of land use to the several specialty fields and in some states considerable progress was made

in bringing specialists prominently into the picture.

LIMITATIONS WITH REGARD TO SPECIALIST PARTICIPATION

In any comprehensive program such as land use planning, which is broader than the direct responsibility of any particular specialist, limitations naturally arise which must be recognized. Some of these limitations are briefly as follows:

1. The initial policy of the Department and the Land Grant Colleges set up the project without bringing in the specialists' group.
2. The State committee in many cases makes decisions without specialist participation to the degree warranted by the problems.
3. Land use planning leaders sometimes consider planning an independent project and therefore do not enlist the aid of specialists.
4. Tendency to regard planning as dealing wholly with intangibles and therefore a project outside the interest of specialists.
5. Lack of specialist personnel to service land use planning and also to carry the already heavy subject matter extension programs and meet other demands for assistance.

Obviously, some of the foregoing limitations existed only in the initial stages of land use planning while others remain as handicaps to fullest participation and greatest progress.

PROBLEMS EMPHASIZE NEED FOR SUBJECT MATTER AID

It should be said that improvement in the situation as regards specialists' help has been noted since the inauguration of the land use project. Over-all analysis and study have brought about a clearer understanding of land use planning and the problems it brings to light, and have pointed to the need of bringing all forces into the program.

The importance of specialist assistance is becoming better recognized. They are being invited to work in closer alignment with step by step developments in the land use planning program. It is becoming increasingly clear that the program is focusing farmer attention on major agricultural problems many of which are in subject-matter fields and are of an extent and character that will require all assistance possible if they are to be solved.

The reports of county committees with their inventories of the agricultural assets, liabilities, and problems thereby presented, together with recommendations for improvements, promise to serve as important guides for adjusting agricultural programs on a sounder basis. Already some county reports have expressed a need for intensive work in subject-matter fields. Unfortunately, in many instances the technical assistance needed is not available to the extent justified by the seriousness of problems.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

In summarizing the situation it can be said that effective participation of the extension specialist in the land use planning program will require (1) fuller knowledge on the part of the specialist of the land use planning process, (2) provision for keeping him supplied with current information, (3) adjustments of specialists' plans, (4) active contact with State and county committees, and (5) the delegation of responsibility for coordinating action in specialty lines for the carrying out of field programs.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO WAYS IN WHICH STATE SPECIALISTS CAN ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE

Due to the situations just described, it is suggested that the following ways and means would aid in helping State subject matter specialists to participate more effectively in land use planning activities:

Administrative clearance.

1. Provide subject matter specialists with the opportunity to obtain a fundamental knowledge of the process of land use planning and its relationship to subject-matter fields of responsibility.
2. Make provisions for representation of subject matter specialists on advisory or other subcommittees of the State land use planning committee.
3. Use subject matter specialists as consultants in the step by step development of county land use planning programs.
4. Development of a yearly schedule for conferences between the land use planning staffs and the subject matter staffs.
5. When State and county land use planning meetings are held, make arrangements to have subject matter specialists present so that they may become better acquainted with State and county committee procedures.
6. Delegate to a subject matter specialist leadership in the planning processes and in coordinating action particularly in counties where major problems lie in a particular subject matter field.
7. At annual State extension conferences provide for a discussion of the subject, "The Place of the Subject Matter Specialist in Land Use Planning."
8. Arrange to have the land use planning county reports and recommendations indexed by subject matter for use by specialists.

9. Keep subject matter specialists currently informed regarding scheduled meetings of land use planning committees at all levels, with the suggestion that when possible they attend such meetings.

10. Classify counties by major subject matter problems (type-of-farming areas) and consider assignment of responsibilities to corresponding specialists.

11. Suggest that county land use committees consider the development of a calendar or schedule of problems to be attacked so that specialists can make provision in their plans for being in attendance when most needed.

What the State specialist can do.

1. Provide background material to land use planning committees at community, county, and State levels regarding the subject-matter field which the specialist represents.

2. Offer to assist at all three levels in an advisory capacity when needed by the land use planning committees.

3. Develop a land use planning file of community and county reports dealing with problems in his subject-matter field.

4. Prepare summaries of technical information for distribution to county workers and land use planning committee members and make plans for incorporating same in the action phases of land use planning work.

5. Furnish helpful supplementary leadership to county agents in the development of the land use planning program in general and give special assistance in counties where major problems lie in subject matter fields.

6. Through talks, letters, literature, and in other ways spread information on successful activities in land use planning work.

7. Make personal visits to State and county lay committee members. Offer to help such lay committee members become familiar with facts, problems, and good procedure in solving problems, so that these committee members will be better able to assume understanding leadership.
8. Develop cooperative plans with other agencies and specialists.
9. Provide time for land use planning activities when preparing annual plan of work.
10. Assist in developing criteria for evaluating the results of land use planning procedure relating to their subject-matter fields.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO WAYS IN WHICH
FEDERAL SPECIALISTS CAN MORE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE

1. Mimeograph and distribute to all State and Federal subject matter specialists the final report of this committee.
2. Prepare a circular based primarily on excerpts from annual reports of subject matter specialists showing examples of successful work in land use planning for distribution to all specialists.
3. Prepare series of articles showing part specialists are playing in land use planning for use in the Extension Service Review.
4. In the news letters or house organs circulated to State specialists, provide for inclusion of good examples of land use planning taken from annual reports of specialists or prepare special articles.
5. Arrange for specialists to attend important general conferences pertaining to land use planning.
6. Encourage specialists to take advantage of opportunity offered by land use planning programs to conduct their work on an area basis, and thus add to the efficiency and results of their projects.
7. Arrange for holding occasional conferences of staff of the

Division of Subject Matter for discussion of land use planning.

8. Arrange for having county agents' annual reports indexed for subject matter activities in land use planning.
9. Arrange to have county land use planning reports indexed for specific subject matter for use of specialists.
10. Encourage specialists to familiarize themselves with land use planning activities in States they plan to visit.
11. Encourage specialists to contact State project leaders in land use planning together with State subject matter specialists for discussion of problems and relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OBTAINING FURTHER
PARTICIPATION OF SUBJECT MATTER BUREAUS OF THE DEPARTMENT

1. Arrange for conferences of representatives of the Department's land use planning staff and administrative heads of various bureaus and divisions for the purpose of explaining more fully the land use planning program.
2. Arrange for follow-up work by land use planning representatives and subject matter specialists as needs of such conferences indicate. Consider expansion or organization of an interbureau committee to include important and pertinent fields of work not now represented such as home-making, plant diseases, animal diseases, insect control, etc.

Committee on Land Use Planning in Relation
to the Work of Subject Matter Technicians.

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